

Washington, DC -- On Thursday, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-7), supported an amendment from fellow Pennsylvanian Congressman Charles Dent (R-PA 15) to the Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act [HR 547]. The amendment, which Congressman Dent offered at the last moment, addressed important infrastructure challenges raised by hydrogen, a viable replacement for fossil fuels. The vote was 226 to 221, with 37 Democrats joining Joe and the Republicans in voting for the amendment, because Joe believes hydrogen is important to our future.

“Global warming is one of the greatest challenges we face, as a nation and globally, and this bipartisan amendment is a step towards combating that threat,” noted Joe. “We need clean burning fuels that will reduce our global warming emissions and end our addiction to foreign oil. Our reliance on fossil fuels weakens our national security, harms our environment, and forces us to rely upon other nations to power our economy. We need to start building the infrastructure that will enable us to replace fossil fuels with biofuels, as well as exploring the further potential of hydrogen. This legislation paves the way towards a clean energy future.

“We came together, in a bipartisan way, to work on solving our current energy situation. This is an important issue and one that we will continue to address in this Congress. I voted for this Republican hydrogen amendment on the Democratic biofuels bill because it is research needed to ensure all means are explored for clean energy.”

With the growing need and demand for expanding alternative and renewable energy sources, one promising alternative is hydrogen. Hydrogen is contained in many natural resources, including natural gas, coal, water, landfill gases and biomass resources including biofuels (like ethanol) and other agricultural products, and over 50 million tons of hydrogen is produced worldwide each year. Hydrogen is currently widely used for making ammonia for fertilizer, methanol, as well as chemical processing, metal production, electronics, and for space exploration. It is critical to support research and development efforts in hydrogen infrastructure, which includes hydrogen production and storage facilities, and hydrogen distribution and delivery systems utilizing local, regional, national networks.

The amendment Joe voted for directs the Environmental Protection Agency, in cooperation with the Secretary of Energy and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, to consider the challenges for design, reforming, storage, handling and dispensing hydrogen fuel from various feedstocks including biomass.

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*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. Congress.*